

App. No. 10/715,686
Office Action Dated December 16, 2005

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 19 and 20 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 21-38 are new.

New claims 21-23 are supported by the subject matter of claim 19 and Figure 1. New claim 24 is supported by Figure 2A. New claim 25 is supported by Figure 5A. New claims 26 and 27 are supported by Figure 4. New claim 28 is supported by page 17, lines 4-7 and Figure 4. New claims 29-34 are supported by the subject matter of claim 20 and Figure 9. New claim 35 is supported by Figure 14. New claims 36 and 37 are supported by Figure 8. New claim 38 is supported by page 32, lines 25-27 and Figure 8.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected as being anticipated by Nagatani (US 5,399,850). Claims 19 and 20 are canceled, rendering the rejection moot. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claims.

Nagatani does not disclose an assembly comprising a casing and a transparent light conductor, wherein the light conductor includes a first portion housed in the casing at least partially, and a second portion projecting out of the casing, as required by new claim 21. Nor does Nagatani disclose an assembly comprising a casing and a light conducting unit, wherein the light conducting unit includes a first transparent member housed within the casing, and a second transparent member partially housed in the casing and partially projecting out of the casing, as required by new claim 29. Rather, Nagatani teaches a lens (16) that is entirely housed within a casing (21). See Figure 3. In contrast, the projecting second portion of the light conductor of the assemblies of 21 and 28 provides a configuration with a higher degree of freedom than that of a light conductor that is entirely housed in a casing. The assemblies of claims 21 and 29 allow light to be guided along a long and optionally bent path. A light conductor entirely housed in a casing, such as that taught by Nagatani, limits the possible configurations of the associated light path. Favorable examination of new claims 21-38 is requested.

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In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612)455-3804.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: May 16, 2006



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Douglas P. Mueller", written over a horizontal line.

Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No.: 30,300
Hamre, Schumann, Mueller & Larson, P.C.
225 South Sixth Street
Suite 2650
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612.455.3800

DPM:mfe